

DATELINE #100 NEW YORK
ALICE RICHMAN SCHACHNER

JULY 21, 1976

SPONSORSHIP IN THE PRINTED MEDIA?
(VOICED PIECE, INSERTS IN TAPE LIBRARY)

ANNCR: DATELINE, NEW YORK. . . PICTURES IN SOUND, OF WORDS AND MUSIC OF PEOPLE, PLACES AND EVENTS IN AMERICA'S METROPOLIS. TODAY ALICE RICHMAN SCHACHNER'S STORY OF HOW -- WHEN A GREAT CORPORATION, WHICH HAS SPONSORED MANY IMPRESSIVE TELEVISION PROGRAMS, DECIDED TO SPONSOR A MAGAZINE ARTICLE -- IT JUST DIDN'T WORK OUT. IT DIDN'T WORK OUT BECAUSE A MAN WHO LIVES ON A CHICKEN FARM IN THE STATE OF MAINE WROTE A LETTER OF PROTEST. IN NEW YORK, ALICE RICHMAN SCHACHNER HAS THE STORY:

VOICE: THE LETTER FIRST APPEARED IN A SMALL-TOWN NEWSPAPER CALLED THE ELLSWORTH AMERICAN. THE WRITER WAS THE DISTINGUISHED AUTHOR AND EDITOR E.B. WHITE WHO LEFT NEW YORK LONG AGO TO SETTLE ON A FARM IN MAINE. MR. WHITE IS SEVENTY-SIX YEARS OLD NOW AND HE DOESN'T WRITE VERY MUCH ANY MORE. BUT WHEN HE LEARNED OF XEROX'S INTENTION TO SPONSOR AN ARTICLE IN ESQUIRE MAGAZINE, HE JUMPED TO HIS TYPEWRITER. XEROX HAD ARRANGED TO PAY ESQUIRE AN IMPRESSIVE SUM OF MONEY TO COMMISSION A LONG ARTICLE BY THE NOTED JOURNALIST HARRISON SALISBURY.

THE ARTICLE WOULD BE A SPECIAL BICENTENNIAL FEATURE BASED ON MR. SALISBURY'S OBSERVATIONS AS HE TRAVELED AROUND THE UNITED STATES. IN RETURN, ESQUIRE WOULD RECEIVE A ONE-YEAR CONTRACT FOR XEROX ADVERTISING. IT WAS AGREED THAT THE CORPORATION WOULD HAVE NO EDITORIAL INFLUENCE OVER THE ARTICLE. BUT XEROX DID NOT LIKE THE ESSAY. ESQUIRE WOULD BE FREE TO PUBLISH IT WITHOUT RETURNING XEROX'S MONEY. THE NAME OF XEROX WOULD NOT BE CONNECTED WITH THE ARTICLE IN ANY WAY. E.B. WHITE CALLED THE

VOICE: ARRANGMENT A DISASTER FOR FREEDOM OF THE PRESS. IN A SECOND LETTER SENT DIRECTLY TO THE CORPORATION, MR. WHITE MADE THE POINT THAT HE DID NOT QUESTION XEROX'S INTENTIONS. BUT, HE SAID, IF THE PRESS IS TO REMAIN FREE AND INDEPENDENT, IT MUST PAY ITS OWN BILLS. XEROX VICE-PRESIDENT DAVID CURTIN TOLD VOA ON THE TELEPHONE E.B. WHITE "STOPPED US IN OUR TRACKS."

TAPE: CUT ONE -- CURTIN

"HIS THEORY WAS THAT WHEN MONEY CHANGES HANDS IN THIS BUSINESS SOMETHING IS LOST, AND WHEN HE SAW SOMETHING SHADOWY HERE IT GAVE US PAUSE AND WE DECIDED MAYBE WE'D BETTER NOT GO AHEAD AND DO THIS. EVEN THOUGH IN OUR OPINION AND HIS OPINION WE HAD DONE NOTHING WRONG. AS HE SAID IN HIS LETTER, NO ONE ACCUSES XEROX OF TRYING TO INFLUENCE EDITORIAL OPINION HERE. BUT, WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN IN THE FUTURE? WHEN A WRITER IS PAID, DOES HE NOT FEEL SOME SORT OF A RESPONSIBILITY TOWARD THE PERSON WHO PAID HIM EVEN THOUGH HE MAY NEVER DO ANOTHER ARTICLE FOR THAT COMPANY? DOESN'T THE MAGAZINE FEEL SOME KIND OF A SENSE OF OBLIGATION WHICH WOULD ERODE THE INTEGRITY OF THE MAGAZINE OR ITS SOVEREIGNTY. WELL, YOU KNOW WHEN FELLOWS LIKE E.B. WHITE FEEL THIS WAY AND OTHER RESPECTED EDITORS -- ALTHOUGH MANY WERE IN OUR CORNER BY THE WAY -- WE THOUGHT WE MIGHT BE DOING SOMETHING WRONG HERE THAT COULD BE INJURIOUS TO THE PUBLISHING FIELD AS THE MONTHS AND YEARS FLY BY."

VOICE: ESQUIRE MAGAZINE CONSIDERED XEROX'S OFFER FOR ALMOST A YEAR BEFORE ACCEPTING IT. DON ERICKSON, THE MAGAZINE'S EDITOR-IN-CHIEF, SAYS THAT HE AND OTHERS ON THE STAFF WERE WELL AWARE OF ITS POSSIBLE IMPLICATIONS. BUT, WHEN THE CORPORATION AGREED TO THE MAGAZINE'S CHOICE OF SUBJECT MATTER AND WRITER, ESQUIRE DECIDED TO GO AHEAD.

TAPE: CUT TWO -- ERICKSON

" I DO BELIEVE THAT IF A MORE UNSCRUPULOUS CORPORATION AND A LESS IMPECCABLE MAGAZINE WERE TO GET INTO THIS WE WOULD FIND AN INCURSION OF ADVERTISING INTO EDITORIAL MATERIAL. SO I UNDERSTAND WHITE'S POINT OF VIEW. THE THING THAT I HAVE BEEN IMPRESSED WITH IS THE FACT THAT THIS WHOLE EPISODE HAS UNDERLINED HOW DIFFERENT PRINT IS REGARDED IN TERMS OF IT CREDIBILITY. NO ONE IS AT ALL UPSET THAT THIS GOES ON IN TELEVISION ALL THE TIME. THAT IT HAD BEGUN IN PRINT WAS SEEN

TAPE: AS HAVING GREAT DANGER. THAT CHEERS ME UP BECAUSE I'M A GREAT
(CONT) BELIEVER IN THE PRINT MEDIUM AND THE FACT THAT THE PRINTED
MEDIA IS RESPECTED AS BEING THE STOREHOUSE OF WHERE THE TRUTH
CAN BE REPORTED TO THE AMERICAN PEOPLE."

VOICE: THE XEROX CORPORATION HAS NOW ABANDONED SIMILAR PLANS TO
SPONSOR ARTICLES IN OTHER MAGAZINES. AND ESQUIRE WILL NOT NOW
CONSIDER OFFERS FROM OTHER CORPORATIONS. THE PRESS IN OUR FREE
COUNTRY IS RELIABLE AND USEFUL, E.B. WHITE WROTE, NOT BECAUSE
OF ITS GOOD CHARACTER BUT BECAUSE OF ITS GREAT DIVERSITY. AS
LONG AS THERE ARE MANY OWNERS. EACH PURSUING HIS OWN BRAND OF
TRUTH, WE THE PEOPLE HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO ARRIVE AT THE
TRUTH AND TO DWELL IN THE LIGHT. MR. WHITE'S AFFECTION FOR THE
FREE PRESS IN A DEMOCRACY GOES BACK A LONG WAY. IT WAS, HE
ADMITS, HIS FIRST AND GREATEST LOVE.

ANNCR: A STORY ABOUT A MAGAZINE STORY THAT LOST ITS SPONSOR...YOU'VE
BEEN LISTENING TO DATELINE, NEW YORK. JOIN US AGAIN NEXT
----- FOR ANOTHER PROGRAM IN THIS SERIES. THIS IS
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